The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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SPANISH PEACE PROPOSALS

UNHAPPY Spain has entered upon the second year of its civil war. It is not our purpose to review the tragic events of the past twelve months but rather to hazard a glance into the future. In many parts of the world today prominent clerics, statesmen, scholars and publicists are raising their voices in a unanimous and stirring appeal for peace in Spain.

Salvador de Madariaga, the Spanish Republic's first Ambassador to the United States, in a letter to the New York *Times,* urges peace by reconciliation. He appeals to each side to try to understand the other. Both, he asserts, are fighting for an ideal. But, he inquires, has not enough blood and treasure been sacrificed to such ideals? Both sides, he contends, are motivated by noble patriotism and are fighting for what they conceive to be a better and happier Spain. His immediate concern is for the real Spain which is slowly being destroyed by ruthless warfare. Rival forces are desperately seeking a victory, a decisive victory that will end the war. Mr. Madariaga appeals to both sides saying that "moral victory—the one that matters—will not be theirs, whoever wins, since a military victory will be due to a predominance of foreign war weapons and to a merely accidental extraneous circumstance without any inherent meaning in the history of Spain."

The Federal Council of Churches, on behalf of a number of prominent American educators, clergymen, writers and others, recently issued a similar statement in this country. They too point out that the Spanish Civil War has now been in progress for a full year and that for all who have the peace of the world at heart a more tragic anniversary could hardly be recorded.

Reviewing recent world history, the statement reminds us that the Chaco war in South America was ended by exhaustion and the Abyssinian war by conquest. Is there no alternative besides these?

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The statement then proceeds to express grave discontent with the various measures of non-intervention entered into by twenty-seven states to localize, so far as is humanly possible, the conflict now raging in the Iberian peninsula. To save civilization a more vigorous moral effort in making peace is required of all of us. An appeal is then made that we do not forget the larger issues of peace.

In conclusion, the signers of the statement express the earnest hope that "the early months of the second year of the war will see a renewed and steadily maintained effort by neutral groups or governments or parties to formulate terms of settlement which would secure for all classes in Spain more than could possibly be secured by peace through exhaustion, and more than could ultimately be retained through victory by force of arms."

Every observer, we are convinced, would joyfully welcome a cessation of hostilities in Spain and an equitable settlement of all the complex issues involved in the tragedy. It is quite true that an immense number of lives have been lost. The property damage is incalculable. The progress of the war thus far has been marked by unbelievable cruelty and savagery, by the massacre of priests, nuns and non-combatants, the organization of the most audacious propaganda machine the world has ever known, the intervention of foreign powers, and the attempts of a non-intervention committee to localize the conflict.

Something more than the mere localization of the conflict is now being sought. We regard the movement for peace on the part of friends of Spain in many neutral countries as a most laudable enterprise. We also hasten to affirm our frequently stated opinion that the victory of the Nationalist cause is a prerequisite for peace in Spain and that a permanent and lasting peace will not otherwise be achieved.

The rising of Catholic Spain one year ago was, in our opinion, morally justified for the reason that certain inalienable rights of the Spanish people were the objects of a ruthless and unjust attack. That moral justification has not been altered by subsequent events of the past twelve months. Peace proposals that would tend to negative the Christian principle of resistance to an unjust aggressor should receive scant consideration. We certainly cannot say that the Madrid government and General Franco were both right and that, therefore, Catholic Spain should join hands with the Negrin government and with Moscow.

If General Franco wins, the issue will undoubtedly be determined by force. Some people have been heard to say, however, that force never settles anything. Writing in the *Month,* Joseph Keating reminds us that armed violence settled once and for all many things. It determined whether Spain should become a Mohammedan state, or whether the Turk should complete the conquest of Europe. Pope Saint Pius V, by organizing the League that won Lepanto, put an end to the Turkish menace in the Mediterranean. John Sobieski finally drove the Turk out of Hungary. Saint Joan of Arc broke the English power in France. In the New Dispensation almost as openly as in the Old, he concludes, Almighty God can be seen to have used human warfare, in spite of the imperfection of the instrument, to accomplish His beneficent purposes.

The tottering Loyalist régime would, in the opinion of many expert observers, heartily welcome any sort of peace proposal. But how is arbitration or negotiation possible today when, on the other side of the council table, Antichrist is enthroned? Peace negotiations, subsequent to a Franco victory which we believe to be inevitable, are both desirable and necessary. At that time, when Spanish culture and all that Spain represents and stands for in Europe and in the modern world shall have been saved from destruction and annihilation, we are confident that General Franco will deal with his former enemies in a generous Christian manner and that, please God, all Spaniards will put aside forever hatred and ill-will and cooperate in building a new Spain.

Week by Week

CHARGING that Court Bill opponents were taking advantage of the period of mourning immediately following Senator Robinson's death, President Roosevelt, in a letter to Senator Alben W. Barkley acting majority leader, denied any intention of abandoning New Deal objectives and strongly insisted that Congress pass legislation at this session to carry out the objectives. Intense interest was manifested in the close struggle between Senator Barkley and Senator Harrison for the majority leadership. It was thought that an effort would be made to kill the measure by having it committed to the Judiciary Committee for further consideration — a move which would be a test of administration strength. Vice-President Garner returned to Washington and took an active part in the struggle that imperils President Roosevelt's entire program. Governor Lehman urged Senator Wagner to vote against the Court Bill because "its enactment would create a greatly dangerous precedent which would be availed of by future less well-intentioned administrations for the purpose of oppression or for the curtailment of the constitutional rights of our citizens." Senator Wagner delayed his reply to Mr. Lehman

The Trend of Events

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for the reason that, it is alleged, he was informed by a high administration source that the fight over the Supreme Court sections of the bill would be postponed until some future time. Senator Wagner, somewhat irritated by the fact that Mr. Lehman's letter was made public before he had received it, indicated that he would not alter his stand in favor of the compromise bill. Senator Barkley of Kentucky, generally regarded as the candidate of the administration and one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the Court bill, was elected Democratic majority leader of the Senate by a vote of 38 to 37. "My policy," he told reporters, "is to be representative of the administration as well as of the Senate in working out to the best of my ability the problems that face the Congress and the country." He refused to make any predictions regarding the Court bill or the rest of the legislative program.

JAPAN insisted that Chinese troops and air forces be withdrawn to their original stations. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek declared that China would not accept the Japanese demands even if forced to a defensive war. He set forth four points which would constitute minimum conditions for negotiation: any kind of settlement must not infringe the territorial integrity or sovereign rights of China; the status of the Hopei-Chahar Council was fixed by the Nanking government and China will not allow any illegal alteration; China will not agree to the removal by outside pressure of those local officials appointed by the central government such as the chairman of the Hopei-Chahar Council; and finally, China will not allow any restriction to be placed on the positions of the Twenty-ninth Army. Latest dispatches indicated that the Japanese had started punitive action southwest of Peiping against the Chinese Twenty-ninth Army. While the 1935 Vatican Concordat, signed but never ratified, was the subject of debate in Jugoslavia's House of Deputies, Belgrade police broke up an anti-Concordat religious procession headed by bishops and clergy of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Concordat provides for the Catholic Church liberty of religious instruction, participation in the control of the government schools as far as religious education is concerned, the rights of Catholic Action and the associations affiliated to it, and a share, corresponding to the percentage of the population, in the grants of money made by the State to the several confessions. For church marriages contracted among Catholics the State recognizes the effect of Canon Law. An extension of the use of the Old Slavian language in the liturgy is contemplated only in a locally limited measure and in places only where this is in conformity with tradition. We see nothing in these provisions that would in any way jeopardize the rights of Serbian Orthodoxy and we sincerely hope the Concordat will be ratified.

Knowing and Doing

THE NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE'S 450,000-word report, "Technological Trends and National Policy, Including the Social Implications of New Inventions," is highly entertaining in the first place as a sort of official H. G. Wells glimpse into the future. It is disturbingly laden, however, with immediate, non-fictional importance. The economic, institutional and social importance of "the mechanical cotton-picker, air-conditioning equipment, plastics, the photo-electric cell, artificial cotton and woolen-like fibers made from cellulose, synthetic rubber, prefabricated houses, television, facsimilie transmission, the automobile trailer, gasoline produced from coal, steep-flight aircraft planes, and tray agriculture" is reinforced in our minds by a backward glance over the first third of the century, during which, as director Ogburn of the committee pointed out, the repercussions of industries based on the automobile, the airplane, the motion picture, rayon and the radio were not anticipated with any constructive foresight. Thus, obviously, increasing traffic could have been better regulated with proper planning.

THERE are, apparently, two great problems. One is to make a sufficient number of us realize, by means of our intellects and without the support of experience, the things which we believe logically we know. Their betters always tell young people that they do not know, they do not know what life is, until they have undergone the proper maturing in tragic experience, and there has undoubtedly always been a great deal in this unhappy contention. An almost heroic effort of sympathetic imagination is required. The second problem arises on the assumption that we have an active enough comprehension to want really to do something. It is a planning problem, and no kind in the realm of statecraft is apparently more difficult for Americans (and not only Americans) to meet. The formation of a "permanent over-all planning body" is not a solution, but only a statement of the question. What powers should such a body possess? The power of persuasion in itself would make the establishment of such a board worth while. It would be to the clear self-interest of labor and industry and governmental units and others to pay close attention. Other powers would have to come experimentally. The TVA and the other "alphabet" groups already present genuinely useful case histories and show how hard it is to make Americans agree upon a point from which we can prevent breakdown from bureaucracy and at the same time breakdown from anarchy and technological revolution.

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THE whole world has watched and listened while hope steadily diminished for the lives and the safe return of Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan. It is therefore without surprise that the news is received that they have finally been given up for dead. The aircraft-carrier Lexington, which was equipped to make the most intensive effort expended in combing that part of the Pacific whence the last signals came from these two brave fliers, has returned to its base without finding any trace of them. Many things have been said regarding the Earhart project and its seemingly tragic sequel, which are fine and just—and some other things which it is safe to guess the sayers will presently wish unsaid. The public feeling of shock at the deliberate risk of a woman's life in the hazardous career of aviation is undoubtedly responsible for some of the graver questions which have been raised. But, while that general feeling is sound and right, a case like Miss Earhart's must be granted as exceptional. Gifts are given to be used: she was a born flier, and it is the need, the business and the right of a flier to fly. It is for technical experts to decide whether Miss Earhart had adequate radio equipment and code training, and whether her craft was fitted with the maximum provisions for life and safety. But the mere layman is happily in a position to decide on more relevant matters. He knows that Miss Earhart was justified in her flying career, even though this, her most ambitious venture, has ended tragically; that she displayed, besides the necessary high technical aptitudes, courage, skill and resourcefulness of the first order; that she brought merited glory to her country, not only as the world's chief woman flier, but as one of the world's chief fliers; and that, as Mr. Lippmann has so finely written, she was a stirring example of disinterested devotion to a cause larger than individual well-being or individual safety. And her companion in this flight, though not equally famous, must be given praise for equal valor.

Amelia Earhart

WE REJOICE that a Committee for Catholic Refugees from Germany, consisting of the Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, Archbishop of New Orleans, the Most Reverend Samuel A. Stritch, Archbishop of Milwaukee, the Most Reverend John F. Noll, Bishop of Fort Wayne, and the Most Reverend Stephen J. Donahue, Auxiliary Bishop of New York, has been formally organized for the purpose of cooperating with the hierarchy in Germany in the care of Catholic refugees. It is the committee's purpose, we are informed, "to help refugees both here and abroad with material aid and spiritual, professional and legal advice." It proposes to raise funds "to relieve the immediate material needs of the refugees and to help them settle in other countries, and also to enlist the support of American Catholics by keeping them informed concerning the position of the Church in Germany and the needs of German Catholics." The Reverend Joseph D. Ostermann, rector of the Leo House, New York City, will work under the archbishops and bishops constituting the committee and will be assisted by a secretary and field worker who will handle the personal problems of the refugees and make necessary investigations, contacts and arrangements. We ask God's blessing upon this splendid and necessary enterprise and urge the fullest measure of support on the part of the laity generally.

German Refugee Aid

ALL KINDS of things are said about modern children, but we submit that it must be generally agreed that they are tough. By this we do not mean to give echo to the moral disquietude evoked by the little Dead-Enders of our day. We are not, for the moment, agreeing with the What Is This Generation Coming To? school of thought. We merely mean that children are resistant to deleterious influences (to put it simply); that it is hard to kill them, or even to make a dent in them. Every neighborbood in the land has its own unpublicized examples: little boys who fall off roofs and rise blubbering because they have split their trousers; little girls fished up out of wells, who are all for going back to get their dolls; little boys and girls who wander in the wilds for a week and turn up with slightly scratched legs and enormous appetites. Very remarkable is this ability of the average child to resist the shock of acute discomfort and mortal peril, no matter what psychologists may say. Experiences that would prostrate or unhinge an adult are taken by youngsters with surpassing casualness. Instances rush to the mind—almost every newspaper, indeed, habitually carries them. Perhaps the most spectacular of recent years were supplied by two kidnapings. In one case, a child lay bound and gagged for three days at the edge of a cistern; in the other, a child, also shackled and gagged, was kept in solitary duress for an even longer time in a blistering desert dugout. These children, miraculously restored to their parents, seem to have merely sneezed, shaken themselves and then gone about their business as usual. The number of these granite-nerved juveniles has been augmented currently by the two-year-old Brooklynite accidentally locked in the staircase well of a school for two days and nights. She had no food or water, and was dressed only in a play suit; the well was very hot all day and very cold all night. Yet all she has to show for the experience is a case of the sniffles.

Iron Youth

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WAGES AND HOURS

By JOHN A. LOFTUS

THE MAJOR weakness in the proposed wages-and-hours bill is simply a rear facet of the social problem which that bill aims to solve. Legislation to assure socially satisfactory conditions of labor and standards of remuneration is something which to date the state governments have not brought about and probably never will bring about. This is briefly the issue which the federal government now proposes to face. And, as the texture of the Black-Connery bill shows, the federal government cannot bring such legislation about, either. This is the reverse facet. It is evident that the legal talent which drafted the present measure attempted valiantly the task of setting up nation-wide standards—and then admitted the task was hopeless.

They are patently correct in their admission. Economic facts stand plumb in the path of any national "straitjacketing" of labor conditions and rates of pay. Geographic and industrial environments vary widely. The cost of living varies from place to place—varies in correlation with such uncontrollables as climate, character of the land-base, and access to produce markets, and with such controllables as transportation facilities and degrees of industrial diversification. The periodicity of labor-demand varies from industry to industry.

These are complications standing in the way of any rigid nation-wide labor standards. They are apparent to everyone. They were apparent to the administration lawyers who drafted the present bill. Result: the job was ducked, handed on to someone else, to an as yet non-existent Labor Standards Board. Can these five hypothetical administrators get any further with the problem than did Messrs. Corcoran, Cohen and Jackson (who, according to Mr. Arthur Krock, were the principal authors of the bill)? That they can, is at best a gamble. What is certain is that a five-man board with such wide discretionary powers as the act envisions will not get very far in the way of actual administration before encountering powerful political pressure—to which the board may or may not yield. Your own knowledge of our past experience with delegated jurisdiction will suggest whether "may" or "may not" is the more correct.

It is often overlooked that there is one obstacle to a fixed minimum wage which no legislation, state or federal, can overcome. Industries vary widely in productivity and profitableness, and consequently in ability to pay prescribed wages. Classical economics would lift an eyebrow at this denial of the perfect mobility of enterprise and capital; but the fact remains; and classical economics, in so far as maintaining rigidly the theory of automatic adjustments, is no longer seriously defended. Legislation, even if sanctioned by the Supreme Court, cannot compel a business to make enough money to pay the wages which idealistic sociologists would wish. The Welsh amendments to the bill making the statutory changes in wages and hours strictly limited and implying a long period of adjustments to those limits does not seem to change this fundamental criticism.

Take the taxi business in the city where I live. Forty cents an hour would mean a weekly wage bill of $67.20 per cab. It is highly doubtful if the cabs are or ever could be productive enough to pay such wages and have any profit. Under the present fare schedule, the most it would be physically possible for a cab to take in would be about $168 a week even if occupied constantly, twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week—an absurd hypothesis. Probably $100 a week is a far too generous estimate of a cab's metered receipts. Out of this must come gas and oil, upkeep on the cab, insurance, administrative expenses, amortization of the cost of the cab (a new cab is needed every fifteen months)—and I haven't even mentioned profit for the company. Figure for yourself where the $67 would come from. All the legislative fiat in Washington cannot force the cabs to make enough to pay the drivers $.40 an hour. The independent drivers who own their own cabs do not make that much, or anywhere near it. They hustle an eighty-four-hour week to clear (in good seasons) about $25 a week after expenses. That's less than $.30 an hour, and it includes tips. Legislation never can or will compel the companies to pay more—to presumably less energetic and productive drivers.

This is not a treatise on the taxi business. I have merely chosen one out of many examples I know, illustrating the ineptitude of legislation to bring employee-prosperity in borderline enterprises. As a matter of fact, the taxi business, being purely local, would not be subject to federal regulation. But the moral is valid, regardless. I chose it as an example, not of interstate activity, but of low-productivity enterprise. What is true of the taxi business is true of many others which might be classed as interstate. It would be difficult just now to select for illustration an activity that would be clearly interstate, because the coverage of the term "interstate" will depend on the progress of the Judiciary Reorganization plan

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and on cognate factors. The point is that there are manufacturing enterprises subject to the conditions of extremely low man-hour productivity; and there always will be, because industries decline and pass away, and the profit-margins of senescent industries sooner or later get to the point where the 40-40 arrangement would force a premature death.

It appears to me that this is one of the most insidious defects in the proposed bill—that it ignores the economic question of the productivity of labor, in favor of purely sociological considerations. To just what extent wages are determined by productivity is in continuing dispute among theoretical economists; but every layman knows that there are some, if not very many, people who, however nice it would be for them to earn at least $16 a week, are simply not worth that much to any business which might employ them; and to this extent, at least, the productivity theory applies. Well, what of the man who gets $14 a week and would not get any more from any employer—will the wages-and-hours bill put him out of work? So it seems. And then what? Will he go on relief? If so, at more than $14, or less? If more, there are a lot of people who will be glad to go on relief and stay on it. If less, it is hard to see where this piece of social legislation can benefit him except in an exceedingly oblique fashion.

Another consideration of some moment is that a national pattern of wages-and-hours conditions for interstate enterprises or those "affecting interstate commerce," no matter how broadly these phrases are interpreted, will inevitably set up a dual industrial universe. There will be the regulated, high-wage industries; and there will be the unregulated local businesses, to which inferior laborers will be forced to migrate, and under whose free-competition egis all borderline and decaying enterprises will seek a haven. The implications of such a sharp dichotomy, all undesirable, are too many and far-reaching to be discussed in this brief paper.

Then, too, this present measure, like any legislation which accentuates or imposes a penalty on labor costs, will hasten the mechanization of industry. The long-range implications here are, of course, favorable; every mechanical and labor-saving advance spells greater productivity, lower production-costs, and eventually (under compulsion) lower prices. But the near-term dangers are harrowing. With our present unemployment and relief problem so very far from being solved, we should beware of any legislation calculated to cause further labor-displacement. Moreover (though this is a minor criticism) any legislation which penalizes labor-costs constitutes a differential and discriminatory penalization of industries directly or indirectly competitive.

Coming back now to the matter of the proposed Labor Standards Board and the "roving commission" which is to be entrusted thereto, I find some difficulty in assuming without question that this arrangement could receive the approval of any Supreme Court, however constituted. It is a grave error to suppose that, if the judiciary bill goes through, the President will be able to appoint six "rubber stamps"; and that, if it does not go through, he will still be able to appoint two or three. He has now a distrustful and aroused Senate to deal with; it is doubtful if that Senate would ratify the appointment of any candidate whose views were not reasonably consistent and reasonably within the borders of legal tradition. And one sacrosanct legal tradition is that it is the Court's function, and no one else's, to determine the coverage of the interstate commerce clause. The Black-Connery bill proposes a sweeping delegation of this prerogative to a board of five men. I doubt if such delegation would be validated by any Supreme Bench acceptable to the Senate; I doubt if even the liberal members of the present Court would sanction it. The delegation of power may be curtailed in Congress but it probably would still remain of unprecedented scope.

Still, it may get past the barrier of constitutionality all right. Suppose it does, what then? Is it a desirable arrangement? Are there, anywhere in this country, five $10,000-a-year men to whom we should care to entrust such grave responsibilities and such far-reaching powers?

Those who have followed the thread of this argument thus far, must view it as a series of negatives. That cannot be helped. The negatives, when summarized, reduce themselves to these: (1) Any wages-and-hours legislation is doomed to failure in so far as it extends to marginal enterprises and disregards the productivity of labor, unless we wish to legislate borderline enterprises out of existence—a dangerous experiment. (2) A federal blanket regulation of wages and hours is impossible, because of innumerable economic variations; this is attested by the fact that the present measure is nothing but a huge blank check and that the actual task of regulation has been passed on to a non-legislative (and non-existent) body. (3) Finally, the Black-Connery bill in particular proposes an administrative set-up of doubtful constitutionality and of doubtful wisdom.

Yet, on the affirmative side, it must be said that the liberal mind (and the Catholic mind, buttressed by papal pronouncements on the minimum-wage issue) must approve of the objectives of the bill. These objectives are: the elimination of child labor, the establishment of minimum rates of pay, and regulation of hours of labor in the interest of the laborer's health and welfare. (One suspects that the administration, on the maximum-hours issue, has also in mind the spreading of

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employment by curtailment of hours worked. This involves questionable economic theory, but is not integral to the main theme.)

These are indubitably desirable objectives. And probably some sort of legislation is called for. I say "probably" because, as one is apt to overlook, legislation is not the only agency of social control, nor, in economic matters, is it necessarily the most effective agency. There are those who hoped and believed that industrial unionism, by bargaining, would be able to secure satisfactory wages-and-hours conditions; but if recent developments in union activity are an accurate presage of the future, little is to be gained in that direction—little except bloodshed and unrest. If legislation is called for, it will be forthcoming, sooner or later. It is absurd and defeatist to say that our economic environment defies legislative control. But the desired legislation will not take the form of the overambitious Black-Connery bill. Its final and desirable form is something that must be determined after much cool and dispassionate thought. It must avoid the extremes of rigid restriction and inept looseness. It must be correlated with relief policies, with the program and activities of the National Labor Relations Board, and with the best interests of American business upon which, after all, the laborer is dependent.

LURING THEM WITH INSURANCE

By EDWARD A. BRANIFF

WITH advancing years I have acquired certain habits, all bad, that give me great satisfaction. Among these are the excessive consumption of cigarettes and the invention of cunning phrases to incite action on the part of others. Without these and other bad habits, life would be dull.

For twenty years I have been selling life insurance in one town, on commission—which means that I have dipped into the minds of thousands of men, and a few women. The experience has been exhilarating. Lately I have been dipping rather freely into my own mind, which is the most fun of all. Why at sixty am I the perverse man I have turned out to be? And why are people interesting for such a variety of reasons? But I find that I am, for my own entertainment, the most interesting character I have met thus far. Let me explain.

In this morning's mail was another of those annoying mimeographed letters from Homer, the manager, telling me how Horace Whoseit has kept a daily record for twenty years of his calls, and estimates each call on a prospect for life insurance to be worth (to Horace) $2.92 and each interview $6.89—or something like that. And the letter winds up by implying that if I got out in the street a little earlier in the morning, and didn't dawdle so much, and worked longer hours, and saw more people, I would make more money. The letter is illustrated with a cartoon of a man with his feet on the desk (that's me!) labeled "two feet from success."

Well, what of it? I would certainly like to make more money, but not at such a price. Besides, I know I would not make nearly so much as Horace Whoseit. Besides, I would not want to make it his way, because I couldn't get any fun out of his methods. To sum it all up: there is no sense at all in the suggestion. Let's reason the thing through.

Suppose I and all the other insurance agents here worked the same as Horace Whoseit of Philadelphia. In no time we would have a saturated market, if it isn't pretty well saturated already—which I suspect it is. Does Homer think of me as a piece-rate mechanic, turning out fifteen calls a day, and competing with 176 other mechanics doing the same thing? If he is so sure of his facts, let him guarantee me the $2.92 per call, and I'll undertake to do it his way—until I break down and quit. Twenty years ago I would have taken the thing seriously, did take it seriously. But now I am of a different mind. I am vastly amused. Almost all the rules of the business I have, from time to time, either strictly kept or openly flouted. System for me is anathema. Freedom to go and come, to work or not to work, to generate my own enthusiasms or sulk in my tent—these are the blessed privileges of my chosen occupation.

In a life insurance office you are not paid for your time. You have to make your living off the people who buy your policies, and that makes you as free as a bird. You need not show up at any certain time in the morning, and if you do not show up at all, no one will miss you. Work or not, it's your own affair. But that sort of thing is sure to get you into slack habits, so the officials in New York who are responsible for sales have to figure out ways of putting you to work. The favorite, time-honored method is the Campaign.

The Campaign furnishes infinite hilarity. Take for example the outstanding effort of the year, the big "push" to be selected in my state as the man to go to Chicago to meet the president of the company. I wonder if he gets his share of the excitement and entertainment which we receive out of a

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sustained effort lasting one month? Is he even aware of the concussions and repercussions of contacts with an indifferent or satirical public, the plotting and contriving to be the Honor Agent in this more or less silly affair, the fearful suspicion that, although you may be the top man up to the very last day, there is pretty sure to be a "dark horse" who has held something back and comes in to nose you out at the finish? If not, he pays the penalty of his exalted position. (I hope he reads this.)

When the Campaign is over and I have recovered my sanity, along comes another of those mimeographed letters telling me that the president is off "for a much-needed rest," and wouldn't it be a fine thing to surprise him with a lot of business when he gets back? Here is someone proposing that because the president is off fishing, I should redouble my labors. The president would be so pleased! And yet, this business is said to be preeminently logical.

It is sentiment, not reason, that generally controls the purchase of life insurance. It should not be that way, perhaps, but since it is, what's to be done except to play up sentiment? I have sat down with a man with a closely reasoned program of family protection, and it left him cold. I have met that man later and made some offhand tender of a "Special Policy" to take care of a child's education, and he made no difficulties about the purchase. Since life insurance constitutes perhaps 80 percent of the estate of the average man, why is this average man unwilling so often to put his mind to the problem of what kind of insurance to buy? But since we are so illogical about other things, I suppose we shall continue to be illogical about our insurance.

I never got very far with the printed word. I have contrived letters which pleased me so much that I expected a deluge of business from them. But the response has always been discouraging. People simply would not read them. Once I sold an annuity to an advertising man who was so pleased with it that he persuaded me to write a series of sales letters about annuities. That was some ten years ago—when most people did not know what an annuity was. I spent weeks on those letters. They were really very good. My friend assured me that, if I followed them up, I would sell plenty of policies. He was wrong. The net results were a profit almost enough to take care of the printing and postage. The largest annuity sold was the result of a phrase I used: "The years that the locusts hath eaten." My prospect's eye lighted on that phrase. He reread the whole series of letters, then called me over and made his purchase. Every now and then he reminds me that the locusts have devoured a few more of his years; but that his annuity has put grain in his granary.

As I grow older and the dislike of real work deepens, I've often wished I had something to sell with a gamble to it, where the winner could collect the stakes instead of his widow. Only the other day I was sitting in an office, waiting for someone with whom I had an appointment. Nearly an hour had gone by when a young woman, whom I knew slightly, sent in her name to the man I wanted to see and then took a seat on the bench at my side. In her lap were several coupon books. She showed them to me, with the names of men and women on the stubs of lottery tickets for steeplechase races in foreign countries. She was doing a thriving business, having sold several hundred tickets to men I knew well. Several of these same men had told me they were utterly unable to finance the purchase of any more insurance.

"The reason I have it so easy," the girl explained, "is that I give people something for their money. If you could attach a lottery ticket to every insurance policy, you would not have to be a salesman. By the way, how long have you been waiting here?"

When I told her, she offered to bet me she would get in before I did—even though she had no appointment. "He really wants to see me," she assured me. She was right. She was called in first, and I left in considerable of a huff.

Well, after all, I have remained in this business a long, long time, and I have made a living at it. Best of all, I have mingled with people, made dear friends, had my share of gaiety and entertainment. Quite a few millions have I added to the estates of families, many of whom needed the money desperately when it came. Quite a few old men and women are living on annuities I sold them years ago—and have little else. But we must not be smug. After all, it was my own living I had in mind when I made those sales.

Banquet for Betrayal

The wheat has gone to market,
The corn is in the crib;
A hungry man can eat his hat,
A hungry man can tear a rib
From out his neighbor's cat.

A dead man never bothers
About his tux and tails;
A skeleton can live on air,
A skeleton can sup on snails
Or gnaw the silence bare.

Who eats, his brother starving,
Who drinks in spite of drouth,
Will be surprised, at Pluto's feast,
To find a mountain in his mouth,
His wine glass filled with yeast.

JOHN ROBERT QUINN.

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THE SOLESMES CENTENARY

By BONAVENTURE SCHWINN

THE ABBEY OF ST-PIERRE at Solesmes near Sablé-sur-Sarthe, Sarthe, France, commonly referred to simply as the Abbey of Solesmes, is one hundred years old this summer.

Founded by Geoffrey, Lord of Sablé, in 1010, as a monastery dependent upon the Abbey of St-Pierre de la Couture at Le Mans, Solesmes was a simple priory until 1837. It knew long periods of peace and calm, and it survived numerous catastrophes. It was twice pillaged and once almost destroyed by fire during the Hundred Years War. The Congregation of St. Maur absorbed it in 1664. Finally suppressed by the Constituent Assembly during the French Revolution in 1790, it stood vacant and desolate for forty-three years, until 1833. Even since its restoration it has been dissolved four times by the French government, in 1880, 1882, 1883 and 1903. But the monks always came back. The motto of Monte Cassino, *Succisa virescit,* can well be applied to Solesmes, for it seems to possess the secret of renewing its youth and rising to new heights upon the ruins of the past. When it was made a Benedictine abbey in 1837, it entered upon an era of importance and influence never before dreamed of in the eight centuries of its existence as a priory. The Solesmes of the last one hundred years is the creation of the inspiring genius of Dom Prosper Guéranger.

Prosper Louis Pascal Guéranger was born at Sablé, three kilometers from the former priory of Solesmes, April 4, 1805. His father was the schoolmaster of the village of Sablé. Prosper grew up in a home of deep Catholic piety and in the shadow of Solesmes. When he was a little boy, his nurse used to take him to visit the great pile of grey stone buildings, that were falling into ruin. They would wander through the long corridors and stand in the chapel gazing up in awe at the sculptured dragon with the seven heads and at the famous "Saints of Solesmes," as the large stone statues of the apostles and angels were called. Their painted eyes seemed to the child to be always watching him, and he thought they wanted to speak to him. For him it was a holy and enchanted place, and in his heart there grew up a great love for the old priory.

After receiving his elementary education and the rudiments of Latin from his father, he went at the age of fourteen to the royal college at Angers, and on leaving Angers entered the diocesan seminary at Le Mans. While in the seminary he thought seriously of becoming a Benedictine. As every Benedictine house in France had been suppressed, he considered entering the Archabbey of Monte Cassino. But this plan was abandoned when his bishop, Monsignor de la Myre-Morry, appointed him his secretary. Guéranger was ordained to the priesthood at Tours, October 7, 1827.

The Diocese of Le Mans, like that of Paris and many others in France, had its own liturgy in the early part of the last century. These liturgies were not the ancient Gallican liturgy but were recent and unauthorized. It sometimes happened that there were as many as six or seven different missals and breviaries in one diocese, and the priest was free to choose which liturgy he would follow. Not long after his ordination Guéranger began celebrating Mass for the Religious of the Sacred Heart at the ancient Abbey of Notre Dame du Pré. There he was given a Roman missal to use. Recognizing the beauty, majesty and concise eloquence of its prayer formulas, which seemed to him to breathe the unction of the Fathers, he realized that he had discovered the official prayer of the Church. From that time on he celebrated Mass only according to the Roman liturgy, and he obtained his bishop's permission to recite the Divine Office according to the Roman breviary.

In 1828, Monsignor de la Myre resigned his see on account of increasing infirmities and retired to Paris, taking his young secretary with him. Lamennais was waging war on Gallicanism, and Guéranger entered the lists under his leadership, becoming associated with a coterie of intellectuals which included Gerbet, de Salinis, Montalembert and Lacordaire. In four articles on the liturgy which he contributed to Lamennais's journal, *Mémorial catholique,* in 1830, he laid down the principle that in order to be authentic and legitimate a liturgy must have the four qualities of antiquity, universality, authority and unction. The Roman liturgy evidently possessed these qualities to an eminent degree, whereas the more recent Gallican liturgies did not.

Monsignor de la Myre died toward the end of 1829, but Guéranger stayed on in Paris as the administrator of a parish until the revolution of 1830 compelled him to retire to his own diocese. He became an honorary canon of the cathedral of Le Mans in 1830 and in this new position was able to devote much time to study.

One day in the spring of 1831 Guéranger read in a newspaper that the former priory of Solesmes was for sale, and he immediately decided to try to preserve the old place for religious purposes. He visited the abandoned priory on July 23 of

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that year, accompanied by Augustin Fonteinne, vicar of Sablé, who was later his zealous fellow-worker, and by Marie and Perrine Cosnard and two of their nieces. The ladies decided to collect money for its purchase. Monsignor Philippe Carron, Bishop of Le Mans, the Marquis de Dreux-Brézé, and the Count de Montalembert became interested and gave their support to the enterprise. In 1832, Guéranger bought the buildings.

On July 11, 1833, he and six fellow priests who shared his desire to restore Benedictinism in France took up residence at Solesmes and began leading the monastic life. Guéranger was the superior of this strange little community, whose members still wore the soutane of the secular clergy and recited the Roman instead of the Benedictine office. The difficulties encountered at first were many and great, as the priests were entirely dependent for support upon the generosity of friends, and all the early companions of Guéranger except Augustin Fonteinne eventually left. Guéranger began wearing the Benedictine habit in 1836. With the approval of his bishop, Monsignor Bouvier, of Le Mans, he went to Rome in 1837 and was received in private audience by Gregory XVI, who gave him great encouragement and blessed the work he had undertaken.

Then important events followed in rapid succession. On July 26, Dom Prosper Guéranger pronounced his solemn vows before Abbot Bini in the sacristy of St. Paul's-without-the-Walls. The apostolic letter, "Innumeras inter," of Pope Gregory XVI, erecting the French, or Solesmes, Congregation with Solesmes as its mother-house, was published on September 1. The Bishop of Le Mans was authorized by the Holy See to raise the priory of Solesmes to the dignity of an abbey and to bless Dom Guéranger as its first abbot, October 31. And four monks made their solemn profession at Solesmes, November 21. The one-hundredth anniversary of all these events is celebrated at Solesmes this year, on July 24, 25 and 26.

Dom Guéranger began publishing his "Institutions liturgiques" in 1840. His thesis was that the introduction of the Roman liturgy was essential for the restoration of the life of faith in France. A storm of indignant protest and criticism was followed by a long controversy. After years of struggle Guéranger's victory was decisive and complete. In 1841, he published the first volume of "L'Année liturgique," which was intended to make the liturgy better known especially among the laity. It was his work of predilection, and he wrote the first nine volumes but died without completing it. The work was finished by one of his disciples, Dom Lucien Fromage.

By 1853, the Abbey of Solesmes had developed sufficiently to be able to branch out; and at the request of Bishop Pie of Poitiers, Guéranger sent a colony of monks to restore the Abbey of Ligugé, near Poitiers, which had been founded by St. Martin of Tours about 360. The Abbey of St. Mary Magdalen in Marseilles was founded from Solesmes in 1865. At the present time eleven abbeys and five priories belong to the French Congregation, all of them owing their existence either directly or indirectly to Solesmes.

Three qualities stand out most prominently in the life and work of Dom Guéranger: his love of the liturgy, his devotion to study, and his loyalty to the Holy See. Although what is known as the liturgical movement in Europe and America was started by Pius X in the first decade of the present century, it was Dom Guéranger who prepared the way for the revival of interest in the liturgy which is taking place in our day. He was the prophet of the liturgical movement. He not only restored the Roman liturgy to the Church in France, but in the French monasteries he developed in the liturgical observance and the public and official prayer of the Church a beauty and perfection of rendition never before equaled in the entire history of the Benedictine Order. And in his Motu Proprio of April 24, 1904, Pius X entrusted the work of preparing the official Vatican edition of the Church's chant "particularly to the monks of the French Congregation and to the monastery of Solesmes."

Besides producing important and scholarly works himself, Dom Guéranger inspired and guided others who have distinguished themselves by their researches. His influence lived after him. All the scholars who are at present working on the Commission for the Revision of the Vulgate in Rome are from the Abbey of St. Maurice and St. Maur at Clervaux, which belongs to the French Congregation.

Dom Guéranger lived at a time when the Church in France, still suffering from the wounds inflicted by Jansenism, was being attacked by infidelity and plagued by Gallicanism. Close union with Rome was of the utmost importance, and the Holy See stood sorely in need of champions in France. Dom Guéranger was just such a defender as the times called for, and his lifelong loyalty to the Pope was whole-hearted, unswerving and militant. So highly did Pius IX esteem him that shortly after the great Abbot's death, which occurred January 30, 1875, he wrote two letters commending Guéranger in terms of the highest praise not only for his work in restoring monasticism and the Roman liturgy in France but also for having during the whole course of his long life courageously defended in writings of the greatest merit the teachings of the Church and the prerogatives of the Roman Pontiff.

Surely Guéranger's prayer expressing the Advent cry of longing, "Rorate, caeli, desuper, et nubes pluant justum," has been answered: abundant graces have been showered upon Solesmes.

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A FORGOTTEN POET

By MARION GRUBB

PEOPLE who enjoy delving in libraries come upon all sorts of treasure trove tucked away in pamphlets of university lectures or in bound copies of old magazines. Such a find is that little pale green pamphlet by Gustav Leopold van Roosbroeck, himself a Fleming, entitled "Guido Gezelle, the Mystic Poet of Flanders."

The pamphlet contains, besides Roosbroeck's lecture given at the University of Minnesota, some delightful translations of short poems by Gezelle, which are extremely valuable to the student of poetry, as there seems to be no general translation of Gezelle's verse in existence. Moreover, Professor van Roosbroeck is an ideal translator, and produces a sympathetic rendering of his countryman's music and imagery.

His account of Gezelle's life is an exquisite bit of painting by evocation. It is like turning the leaves of an old sketch-book filled with drawings in colored chalks and in water-colors. The gardener's cottage, where Guido was born in 1830, "was one of those century-old dwellings which abound in the fields of Flanders, the thatched roof of tawny gold, blackened by rain in velvet and mossy patches, sagging low over the whitewashed walls broken into a thousand capricious crevices; bright green shutters framing the small leaded windows; and all around the house the bronze and saffron tints of the autumn leaves and the blaze of late roses. As a gardener's son he acquired early . . . that direct vision of nature which we find in his work, that sensuous delight in color of the Fleming, by temperament and tradition a painter." Gezelle's verse, expressed in the patois of his lovely native land, gave back his love of it in all its moods, in its every smell and sound and color.

But the love of the land was not all; there was also the love of God. As a child he made with his mother frequent visits to Bruges, that city of mystic devotion, where everywhere there are churches and convents, and life goes on with hardly a change from the Middle Ages. This old city wakened in Gezelle his native mysticism and took his soul to live forever in the "Moyen Age énorme et délicat."

When he was twelve years old, he was sent to the little seminary at Rousselaere, and at twenty entered the graduate seminary at Bruges, where he studied for three years until he became a priest. Returning to Rousselaere, he gave courses in poetry to a group of enthusiastic students, one of whom, Hugo Verriest, speaks with great feeling of Gezelle's teaching: "He pointed to flowers, the sky, dancing children, and the quiver of leaves upon a sunlit wall. 'These and Christ are my esthetic principles, my rules, and my books.' " But, as many unconventional teachers find themselves today a thorn in the flesh of the unimaginative and academic, his originality, his power, his creative gift, above all, his influence began to arouse the suspicion of his superiors, who dismissed him for not conforming to their scheme of things. His bishop advised him to stop writing verse in the West Flanders dialect. It was an offense. Gezelle tried to obey. For thirty years he strove to shut the eyes of his imagination when he looked on the rustling reeds, the quivering leaves of the poplars, or the long ripples in the barley-fields. He hid in his desk what he wrote, or permitted only a few close friends to read the verses, almost none of which voiced rebellion or complaint. Still, there was no denying that the blight which had overtaken his spirit had communicated itself to his work. It lacked the mystic joy of his early verses written before his exile. For four years he had been at an English seminary; later he came back to Belgium and lived as under-curate at Bruges for the last twenty-eight years of his life.

At the very end, he was given a post as director of a nuns' cloister at Bruges. Of this tardy recognition, Gustav Verriest wrote: "God forgive them; Flanders never will." It was in this cloister that he died, seated by his open window, looking up to the sky, saying to himself, "I have loved so much the gay whistle of the birds."

After his death it was roses, roses all the way. Statues were erected in his honor, and a great number of priests and men of letters followed him to the grave.

The lyrics he wrote when he was less than thirty and those he wrote when he was past sixty are his best. At the end of his life, when through the interest of the younger generations of poets and students his real genius had become recognized, at least by a few, he seemed to recapture something of his youthful ardor and spontaneity.

Jethro Bithell has said of Guido Gezelle: "His poetry possesses something immediate, like sunlight, rustling leaves and silver spray; it is music and rhythm, the immediate voice of the world's beauty, transcribed in words." Even in translation those qualities are present:

"Once there fell a leaf on the water
The little leaf laughed and laughing was that water
My soul now was that little leaf and that water
The liquid tinkle of harpstrings was that water . . .
Once there lay a little leaf on the water."

Such tiny poems are written with no punctuation, like the flow of images in dreams.

His gift for seeing is shown in the description of doves in the courtyard of a Flemish farm:

"Out! There they come all, out they are flapping, fluttering with all their feathers. Echo rattles far and wide, and the deep blue of the sky hovers grey with whirring wings. Three times they turn round and three times back, so flies the flock, swiftly on, till it can find something to pick; then, hark! their rustling plumes all peeping and as if their wings were sleeping in the languid, languid slide, so they glide now here below, and before their little red feet touch the earth, all airy chaff, straws and dust, down and motes puff away from under their beating wings."

Gezelle lived on a spiritual plane and was able to resolve all opposition in love and faith—"harmony which does not exist outside the Catholic Church," says Professor van Roosbroeck, in concluding his appreciation of Gezelle's exquisite contribution to life and letters.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—As soon as he was stricken with the heart attack that brought his death on July 20, Marquis Guglielmo Marconi sent for his parish priest, who administered the Last Sacraments. The great inventor was fully conscious and accompanied the priest in the prayers. He expired while reciting the "Our Father." * * * The Holy Father's missionary intention for August is: "That non-Christians may be led to the Faith by the splendor of the Catholic Liturgy." * * * The French Committee for Civil and Reigious Peace in Spain has issued a statement in *La Croix,* Paris Catholic daily, proposing to cooperate in support of any initiative which can be undertaken to render less inhuman the consequence of the war. * * * The Reverend Marcus Glover, jr., believed to be the first native Negro of the New York Archdiocese ordained to the priesthood, recently celebrated his first solemn high Mass at the Church of St. Francis de Sales, New York City. * * * Plans for the first Canadian National Eucharistic Congress to be held in July, 1938, have been organized. His Eminence Rodrigue Cardinal Villeneuve, Archbishop of Quebec, is General President of the National Committee. * * * Montezuma Seminary, recently established on a site near Las Vegas, N. M., for the training of Mexican candidates for the priesthood, will be opened on September 8. * * * The fiftieth anniversary of the French Confederation of Christian Workers, comprising 2,000 syndicates and 500,000 employees of commerce, has just been celebrated in Paris.

The Nation.—The United States Employment Service placed 224,692 persons in private jobs last June, 81.9 percent more than in June, 1936. The number of job-seekers registered with the U.S.E.S. offices throughout the country at the end of June was 5,016,014, the lowest since statistics have been kept; 5.5 percent less than at the close of May and 22.8 percent less than in June, 1936. * * * After six and one-half years of persistence, the state of Alabama agreed to waive the death penalty in the case of one of the Scottsboro boys, and demanded instead life imprisonment, "to vindicate the laws of Alabama against the onslaughts of powerful forces in the North. . . ." Two Negro youths, charged with stabbing a policeman, were taken from the Tallahassee county jail, July 20, and shot to death by four masked white men. * * * Senator Byrd announced to the reconvened Senate that he would oppose the quick passage of the executive reorganization bills sponsored by the administration, claiming that economy should play a larger part in proposals. * * * More than 6,000,000 adults and children are taking dancing lessons, the Dancing Teachers Business Association reports. "The movies, the ballets and similar enterprises have all helped to stimulate this interest. More than $100,000,000 is now being spent each year for dancing lessons by the American public." * * * The National Federation of Business and Professional Women, holding a convention in Atlantic City, heard a series of ultra-suffragette speeches and determined to push women in public fields. Principal legislation to be sponsored by the federation was fairly standard: extension of the merit system in civil service, establishment of an Academy of Public Affairs, federal aid to public education and repeal of Section 213 of the National Economy Act.

The Wide World.—Great Britain submitted a compromise plan to the twenty-six nations represented on the Non-Intervention Committee. Proposals included the discontinuance of the sea patrol in favor of international officers at Insurgent and Loyalist ports; the restoration of the land patrol; the withdrawal of foreign volunteers from Spain; belligerent rights to be granted to both sides, provided that volunteers have been withdrawn and that the list of contraband shall be identical with that adopted by the committee. All committee members accepted the terms as a basis of discussion. Disagreement was almost at once revealed over the question whether the withdrawal of foreign volunteers from Spain should precede or follow the granting of belligerent rights. Nationalist gains were reported on the battlefront west of Madrid. * * * Nicaragua is seeking United States financial aid in constructing a channel from the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Nicaragua. In return, the United States would be permitted to ship troops and materials over the newly completed railroad from Lake Nicaragua to the Pacific Coast in case of emergency. * * * The French Cabinet approved Finance Minister Georges Bonnet's plan to increase taxes by some 8,000,000,000 francs. Railway passenger and freight rates will be increased by an estimated total of 2,500,000,000. Mr. Bonnet has also proposed a drastic cut in public expenditure in order to achieve budgetary equilibrium.

* * * *

Building and Housing.—One of the problems that came out more clearly as the Court issue simmered was that of public housing. The newly formed National Housing Committee issued its first bulletin over the signature of its chairman, Monsignor John A. Ryan. It said: "A public housing program for the United States is rapidly crystallizing in the minds of men and women who have given years to a conscientious, unselfish, intelligent and detailed study of it. The remedy is at hand. It cannot be achieved without the cooperation of Congress, of the President, of the courts, of the states and the municipalities of the whole nation, and by an informed and aggressive opinion." The bulletin points out the terribly low incomes of most American families and declares that "this fact gives rise to the question of public housing." Meanwhile, when a rumor spread that the President was inclining toward a new housing study directed particularly at reducing rents by inducing savings

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bank depositors to invest in limited dividend housing construction, Senator Wagner protested that there has already been sufficient study to warrant immediate action: "The impossibility of reaching the slum dweller without public housing and public subsidy has long been proved. . . . To help these underprivileged groups, whose immediate help is one of the most imperative necessities of the moment, both from the social and general economic standpoint, requires the prompt passage of the Wagner-Steagall Act." The F. W. Dodge Corporation reported that, east of the Rockies, during the first half of 1937, for every $1 spent on public construction, $1.70 was spent for private. During the first six months of 1936, the ratio was $1 public to $.93 private. Total construction was up 21 percent the first half of this year.

Labor.—Labor struggles, with the steel strike dying down, were somewhat less intense, but continued to be extremely widespread. In New York City the National Maritime Union, rank and file organization formed last spring in protest against the conduct of the International Seamen's Union, held its first annual convention beginning July 20. A showdown between the N.M.U. on the one hand, considered a C.I.O. union even though as the convention opened it was not officially affiliated with it, and also considered similar in outlook to the Maritime Federation of the Pacific with which it might eventually merge, and on the other hand, the I.S.U., the older, A. F. of L. union, which seems to be guided by Joseph Ryan, leader of the International Longshoremen's Association, is expected soon. The National Labor Relations Board has ordered that elections be held as promptly as possible among the unlicensed personnel of 50 steamship lines operating out of the Atlantic and Gulf ports to determine whether the men want the N.M.U. or the I.S.U. as their representative for collective bargaining. * * * A Common Pleas judge in Detroit, after hearing exhaustive testimony, ruled that the Ford Company and eight of its employees must stand trial in September on criminal assault charges as a result of the beating administered in May to union men at Ford's River Rouge plant. * * * A coroner's jury in Chicago rendered a verdict of "justifiable homicide" in connection with the killing of ten men by police during the Memorial Day riot at the Republic Steel's South Chicago mill. The state will now press charges of criminal conspiracy against the strikers. * * * The Inland Steel Company stated that after being inclined to sign with the steel union, they had been persuaded not to do so by occurrences which "bore out our contention that the S.W.O.C. was irresponsible and would use lawless methods to attempts to gain its ends."

Farm Legislation.—On July 15, the Senate accepted a conference report on the farm tenancy bill upon which the House had previously voted favorably. It compromises the Senate idea of keeping the land under federal ownership to insure stability of farm occupancy and wisdom of farm land usage with the House idea of giving tenants immediate full possession. Immediate title is given, but resale is forbidden for five years. Appropriations of $10,000,000 the first year, $25,000,000 the second and $50,000,000 the third—with the idea that the $50,000,000 will go on annually thereafter—are provided to put the land in the hands of the tenant cultivators. On the same day a general "parity bill" was introduced into the Senate, and on July 20 Representative Jones introduced into the House a "substitute AAA bill" which was said to be sponsored by the administration and powerful farm groups. Mr. Jones gave the outline: "(1) It continues the present Soil Conservation Act as a basis. (2) Its declared objective is to establish and maintain so far as is practicable parity prices for all farm commodities and parity income for all farmers, as well as to continue soil conservation." Parity prices are taken as those which give farmers in return for their products purchasing power equivalent to what they received from 1909 to 1914. "(3) It provides an ever-normal granary, warehouse or storage reserve for the five major non-perishable commodities which are ordinarily produced in surplus quantities (wheat, cotton, rice, tobacco and hogs, which are taken to be live corn)." Processing taxes come in here. They would be levied on these items when the surpluses filled granary needs. "(4) The measure provides a graduated scale of soil-conservation benefit payments so that there will be a reduction in payments to large operators. (5) It provides a fund for search for new uses and new markets. (6) Provision is also made for the use of a fund for the purpose of disposing of our surplus commodities both at home and abroad." (7) The Secretary of Agriculture would help farmers and cooperatives get freight rate adjustments. "(8) As to certain crops a market control provision as a further safeguard is provided."

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—Clergymen were charged with talking on economic questions "without going to the trouble of investigating the situations they discuss," by Colonel William Frew Long, general manager of the Associated Industries of Cleveland, who addressed the Civic and Social Welfare Committees of the Cleveland Church Federation. "I have noticed," he said, "that even your national bodies, such as the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, seldom go to the effort to get an unbiased opinion. They usually get the testimony of one industrialist and interpret that as being the voice of industry. Or they take the expression of one paid agent of labor and interpret his statement as the voice of labor. I do not know of an instance when this national church body has really sought to fairly investigate both sides of labor disputes." * * * A special two-week tour of Nova Scotia and attendance at the Co-operative Conference at Antigonish has been arranged by the Brooklyn Church and Mission Federation and the Cooperative League of America. The tour director, Reverend J. Henry Carpenter, reports that about seventy-five cooperators have already signified their intention of making the tour. The group includes clergymen and laymen, white and colored, of all denominations. * * * For the first time since 1929, the Methodist Episcopal Church has been able to register a gain over the previous year in contributions to its connectional enterprises.

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Palestrina. — The release of Palestrina's "Missa Brevis" on the current month's Columbia Masterwork list adds appreciably to the supply of authentically recorded Catholic music. The "Missa Papae Marcelli," which Palestrina wrote at the express commission of the Council of Trent, is already available on records in its entirety. A few other compositions of this prolific Italian composer have also been recorded, including the renowned "Improperia," which was included in Victor's famous Sistine Choir recordings of several seasons ago. But of the other ninety-two masses, forty-five hymns, ninety secular and fifty-six church madrigals nothing appears in domestic record catalogues and but little in such foreign lists of those of the German Musica-sacra, Chrischall, and French Lumen companies. The eighteen members of the Madrigal Singers, conducted by Lehman Engel, do a commendable task in interpreting the dignified, lofty and religious sentiments of the "Missa Brevis." How important the influence of the work must have been in the sixteenth century, when Church composers used every secular melody and street ballad as *canti fermi* for their work, music lovers will quickly appreciate. Not one of Palestrina's best-known masses, it is certainly one of the loveliest religious compositions ever written. Here it is available in an album of three twelve-inch records.

Catholic Americana.—The Riggs Library at Georgetown University is sending out a mimeographed list of all Catholic books and pamphlets published in the United States before the year 1831. Since the appearance of "Bibliographica Catholica Americana" by the Reverend Joseph M. Finotti in 1872, no attempt of this kind has been made. Father Finotti's list carried the account up to and including 1820 only. Since his time the date of Early Americana has been generally advanced to 1830. The Georgetown list thus contains 174 titles of books which did not fall under Father Finotti's category. In addition to this, there have been discovered on the Riggs Library shelves 44 books published before 1821, the titles of which were unknown to Father Finotti. In all, 597 titles are listed in the new work. The Riggs Library at Georgetown was particularly suited to act as a base for this new research in Catholic Americana since it is more than 200 years old, having had its origin at old Bohemia Manor in Maryland, some thousand of whose books are still on the Georgetown shelves. Contemporary additions as the books appeared made the Georgetown collection a unique repository of Catholic books of the early nineteenth century. Thus of the 295 books listed by Father Finotti as published before 1821, no less than 237 already have been found on the Riggs shelves, with the hope that more will yet be located. The new list, compiled by the Reverend Wilfrid Parsons, S.J., will be of interest not only to librarians throughout the United States but also to the general public, for it contains many items such as old prayer-books and books of devotion and controversy which may still be cherished in many families as heirlooms, but without an adequate appreciation of their rarity and historical interest. For this reason, Father Parsons is appealing to Catholics generally to furnish him with the titles of old Catholic books which they may possess, and which were published in the United States before 1831.

Cracker-barrel Discussion.—Dr. Everett R. Clinchy, director of the National Conference of Jews and Christians, recently announced that a daily symposium on "Unifying Influences in a Democracy" will be a leading feature of the Williamstown Institute of Human Relations, to be held on the campus of Williams College at Williamstown, Mass., from August 29 to September 3. Prominent publishers, editors and newspaper writers will center their attention upon the theme, "Public Opinion in a Democracy." This year's Williamstown Institute will have two specific aims: first, to consider the motion picture, the press, the radio and other agencies by which American public opinion is shaped, from the point of view of their relation to ethics and religion; second, to suggest how these agencies of public opinion can promote more wholesome human relations in the United States, consistent with the New World tradition of religious liberty, civil freedom and human rights for all culture groups in our population. "The Williamstown Institute," Dr. Clinchy declared, "will be a twentieth-century expression of an old American institute, the cracker-barrel discussion. That cracker-barrel, around which neighbors of all opinions and convictions met in every town worth its salt, performed an essential service in our nineteenth-century democracy. Citizens communicated their views, critically examined their mutual concerns, and fashioned, however unconsciously, the public opinion of the day. Such is the function of the 1937 Williamstown Institute."

Wisconsin Apprentices.—The Wisconsin apprenticeship system, legally organized twenty-six years ago, but not fruitful while all youths set themselves to become teachers, lawyers, executives or other "white collar" workers, has just been rendered more effective by a provision which makes the state's thirty-three public employment bureaus placement offices for apprentices. Interest in the trades requiring apprenticeship has grown during the depression and there are now about 2,200 under contracts regulated in the state system, and a further upward swing is now expected. About 2 percent of these are girls. The industrial commission provides the contract form, attempting to insure advantages both to the employer and the student. The commission, the employer, the child's parent or guardian and in many instances the union are parties to the contract. Usually the apprenticeship period continues three, four or five years, and in some crafts the actual number of hours of training is specified. To become a journeyman machinist, for instance, the law requires 8,320 hours. Progressive compensation is provided, the average during apprenticeship having to equal 50 percent of a journeyman's pay. The commission sees to it that the young people receive well-rounded instruction, including practise in the use of all of the instruments of the trade. Attendance at a trade or vocational school is required during some periods so the apprentice may get the science and theory of his business. The unions, jealous about control of apprentices, are said to be cooperating smoothly.

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The Play and Screen

The Federal Theatre Project

THAT the Federal Theatre Project has been a disappointment artistically is to put it mildly; that it has been directed, at least in New York, largely by radical and Communist influences has also been apparent. That the latter has been the cause of the former, it would be perhaps too much to say, but the Federal Theatre's absorption in propaganda certainly has not helped the artistic merit of its productions. And now from the report of Ralph M. Easley, chairman of the executive council of the National Civic Federation, it is evident that the Project has not helped the actor.

According to figures which Mr. Easley has submitted to President Roosevelt only 36 percent of those employed in the Theatre Project have been professional theatrical people of experience, while 76 percent of the employees belonged to the Workers' Alliance, and 38 percent were members of the Communist party or supporters of the Communist movement. Of the supervisors Mr. Easley states "82 percent are members of the Communist party or avowed supporters of the Communist movement." And in summing up he declares, "It has come to a point where relief work on the Federal Project has been turned into an outright racket." Now the present writer has no means of checking up the accuracy of Mr. Easley's figures, but he knows from complaints made by bona fide actors who have been employed on the Project that certainly a large percentage of the so-called actors and actresses have had little or no experience in the professional theatre. In fact in the theatrical profession itself the management of the Federal Theatre Project has been an open scandal.

The trouble has been that instead of placing the direction of the Theatre Project in the hands of the Actors' Equity Association, the management of which knows the needs of the profession and those who belong to it, the Project was given to people who had had no professional experience whatever. These people have spent $35,000,000 and the greater portion of this huge sum has apparently gone to people who have had no right whatever to it. That its artistic result has likewise been almost nil, a dozen productions at the very most having been worthy of praise, is of course a commonplace. In his letter to President Roosevelt Mr. Easley goes on to say in regard to both the Writers' and the Theatre Projects: "Your principles have been perverted, your great ideals have been prostituted. We appeal to you in the name of the professional actors and writers for whose benefit these projects were created, and who now find themselves thrown out of their jobs, to have these conditions investigated and rectified."

To those who have followed the productions of the Federal Theatre these words will not seem too strong. It is not too late to face the facts. The direction of the Federal Theatre Project should at once be turned over to the Actors' Equity Association, or at least the recommendations of the Association should be followed implicitly. The communistic trend of the present direction of the Project in New York, especially in the various presentations of the Living Newspaper, has been unconcealed and unashamed, and when on top of this comes the realization that the actors and actresses themselves have been recruited largely from radical organizations with no regard for the fact that the performers have never been professional players, it is surely time that President Roosevelt called a halt on what has been going on.

The Theatre Project has done some fine things. "Murder in the Cathedral," the Negro "Macbeth" and "Doctor Faustus" are the three outstanding productions, but there have been perhaps half a dozen, certainly not more, plays which were well enough done. This is all that the Project has accomplished artistically, a pitiful showing beside the Federal Music Project, which was directed by musicians for musicians, and not by radical propagandists for their like-minded "comrades." The Music Project has shown what might have been done had the federal government taken the theatre equally seriously. It is time that the theatre be given its chance.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

The Story of Emile Zola

WARNER BROTHERS, pioneers in that field, cinematically, emerge as able biographers with their admirable telling of "The Story of Emile Zola," an outstanding dramatic and artistic presentation of that intrepid novelist who fought for freedom and justice, against sham and hypocrisy, as climactically exemplified by his fiery defense and ultimate vindication of the innocent Captain Alfred Dreyfus which captured the imagination of a whole world several decades back.

They have created a real drama in the lives of men, every bit as engrossing as their "Story of Louis Pasteur," with Paul Muni again delivering a strong performance in the central character, aided no little by a large and unusually competent cast, many of them characters of dramatic historic careers — Anatole France, Captain Dreyfus, George Clemenceau, General Mercier and Paul Cézanne. Joseph Schildkraut is outstanding as Dreyfus. So is Gale Sondergaard, as his wife.

There are continuing emotional values in the complications which arise from Captain Dreyfus's false imprisonment, on conspiracy charges and a framed trial; his slow, helpless misery on Devil's Island, and then in the brilliant finale when, through the untiring efforts of Zola, he is released and returned to Paris, retried and acquitted, with all of his army honors restored. Director William Dieterle surpasses all works of his long career, inspiring not only the performances, but photography, musical scoring and treatment as well. He masterfully employs the dramatics of the Dreyfus case to sympathize with the French novelist who dared to stand up before his nation, and to whom recognition for his championing of truth and the downtrodden came posthumously. "Zola" is as entertaining as it is biographically enlightening. Some romantic license was taken, but the many historical details are advanced as authentic.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

SHARE THE PROFITS

Providence, R. I.

TO the Editor: It all depends on the interpretation. And Father Thorning, in THE COMMONWEAL for July 16, in quoting from "Quadragesimo Anno," that "the wage-contract should, when possible, be modified somewhat by a contract of partnership, as is already being tried in various ways to the no small gain both of the wage earners and of the employers," associates these words with the various schemes of special industries to increase their own profits. This quotation can as reasonably be applied to the piece-work system that prevails in many industries, and is a recognition of the fact that abundance of production, even though of benefit to the employers, also tends to the well-being of the workers.

But what is the ultimate drive of Pius XI? A little above the lines previously quoted, he says: "Every effort, therefore, must be made that at least in future a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy, and that an ample sufficiency be supplied to the workingmen."

In this the implication reasonably is that the gain to the employers ought to be curtailed, not enhanced by "share-the-profits" schemes. And how can the gain to employers be lessened? Certainly not by giving any sort of bonus to the workers, but by a reduction in the price of goods to the benefit of society as a whole.

In the words of the encyclical: "Wealth, therefore, which is constantly being augmented by social and economic progress, must be so distributed amongst the various individuals and classes of society that the common good of all, of which Leo XIII spoke, be thereby promoted. In other words, the good of the whole community must be safeguarded. By these principles of social justice one class is forbidden to exclude the other from a share in the profits."

Again, quoting from the encyclical: "The exigencies of the common good finally must be regulated with a view to the economic welfare of the whole people. . . . A reasonable relationship between different wages here enters into consideration. Intimately connected with this is a reasonable relationship between the prices obtained for the products of the various economic groups, agrarian, industrial, etc."

There is one sentence that is never referred to by Catholic economists: "A reasonable relationship between different wages here enters into consideration." It is the high-priced union labor that to a great extent prevents the unskilled and unorganized workers from obtaining a living wage. Some will say, "Let everybody join the union." Perhaps this is the solution, because then it would be apparent that what one group of workers gains another group of workers must lose; just as what one industrialist gains another industrialist must lose. For, as Professor Henry Pratt Fairchild has written, "The profit system is an illusion and a dream."

M. P. CONNERY.

THE AMERICAN NEWSPAPER GUILD

Camden, N. J.

TO the Editor: In regard to your recent editorial on the American Newspaper Guild, I am a member of the Guild, by compulsion, and agree with your criticisms.

The general membership had no vote on committing the group to the Bolshies in Spain, on joining the C. I. O. or taking sides in the Supreme Court controversy. The delegates to the St. Louis convention, so-called, were hand-picked. They are notoriously sympathetic with the "liberals" in Russia, Spain and France, and as anti-Catholic as they dare be in public. They have the labor-above-all complex.

The guilders have their office OGPU and have the power to compel the owner (tied to an iron-clad contract) to dismiss at their order any dues or assessments recalcitrant. They whoop gleefully when any factory is seized by sit-downers but woe be to the member in their clutches who essays a dues sit-down. Consistent beggars! They have adopted the check-off system whereby members' dues and assessments are taken out of each week's salary by the employer and turned over to the guild. No accounting ever is made to the membership. Elections are a farce, the "gang" rotating in filling the key positions, their hanger-ons taking the lesser.

They have not yet attempted to dictate the news and editorial policies of any paper but have succeeded in having barred from use in headlines the word "Red" in connection with their comrades in Spain. But to refer to the Nationalists of General Franco as Rebels, Insurgents and Fascists is, to them, ethical. Oh, well, one must make allowances for the vagaries of the self-styled liberals. They even are becoming pompous and self-righteous, losing the last glimmering of a sense of humor some of them once may have had. They are of the God-Be-Praised Barebones of Old Noll's day who would save us (economically) if they had to break our necks, or pocketbooks, to do it.

GEORGE JOSEPH NOLAN.

CATHOLIC NEWSPAPERS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Indeed it seems both desirable and necessary for Catholic journalism to establish a daily Catholic newspaper, one not entirely religious in content, but which will present the Catholic side of the news; thus it should force biased papers to consider and not disregard the opinion held by Catholics on various subjects.

ARTHUR FRANCIS MCGOVERN.

PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: I consider the editorial "President of the People," in your issue of June 25 exceedingly unfair. It implies that everyone opposed to the court packing scheme is also opposed to reforms of existing evils and injustices, which is not true. It also seems to ignore the fact that the proposed bill was rejected by majority vote of a properly appointed Senate committee.

W. J. RYAN.

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Books

Equity Ownership

Seven Kinds of Inflation, by Richard Dana Skinner. New York: Whittlesey House; McGraw-Hill Book Company. $2.50.

"THE PURPOSE of this book," says the author in the Preface, "is to help the layman defend himself, and his own judgment, against this verbal assault and battery of the calamity howlers in one year and the fatuous optimists in another."

To a degree that is very unusual in books dealing with inflation, the author has succeeded in his purpose. The layman who gives the book one careful reading will be sufficiently encouraged to read it once more. When he has finished the second reading, he will find that he has the key to the solution of most of the mystery and mystification with which the subjects treated by the author have been enveloped. The "seven kinds of inflation" comprise four which the author calls "absolute" and three which he denominates "relative." The former are of: bond prices, short-term interest rates, equity prices, and general price level. The "relative" inflations are of: debt compared to wealth, interest payments compared to income, living costs compared to income. Each of these seven topics is treated in at least one chapter and three of them in two chapters.

The last chapter, entitled "Owners in Bondage," is the most interesting and the most challenging. It opens with these statements: "The inescapable conclusion of any factual study of the major kinds of inflation is that debt, in its many forms, moves restlessly and relentlessly beneath all of them. . . . Changes in some part of the debt structure are chiefly responsible for the intensity, height and depth of the great waves that carry our whole civilization from boom to panic and back to boom again." The growing importance and menace of debt in our industrial system are indicated by percentages describing debt claims in relation to national wealth, rising from 22 percent in 1920 to 45.9 in 1936. This debt capitalism, says the author in the concluding paragraph of the last chapter, "is the very core of inflations and their agonizing aftermaths. Whether or not we must continue to foster or nourish it—until it erupts in some ultimate crisis—is probably the most important single practical problem facing our social, political and economic world today."

Despite its magnitude and diffusion, however, debt capitalism, in the opinion of the reviewer, is not the original and fundamental cause of the evils which the author describes. It is itself in large part the effect of a bad distribution of income. Too much income goes to the creditor classes and too little to the working classes who must greatly add to the nation's burden of debt by instalment purchasing and who are unable even by this meretricious aid to buy sufficient goods to safeguard the industrial system. But this is a long argument, and cannot be developed here.

The remedy proposed by the author is, briefly, to reduce as rapidly as possible the financing of both new and old

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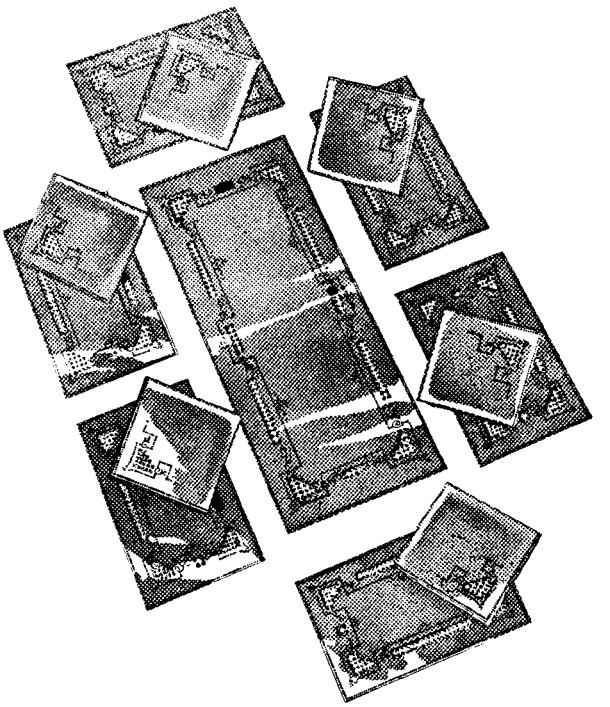

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enterprises by the sale of bonds and to increase with all practicable rapidity the proportion of financing that is done by the sale of stock. In other words, equity ownership must grow at the expense of creditor ownership. This position has many interesting implications; for example, it recalls the teaching of the Church and the practise of governments in the Middle Ages concerning the lawfulness of profits from active capital combined with risk-taking and the unlawfulness of gains through lending of money divorced from risk. But these implications cannot be pursued further in this brief review.

The means suggested by the author to effect the change which he advocates in financing are set forth sketchily, yet with a certain degree of comprehensiveness, in the last chapter of the volume and in two appendixes.

In the field which it covers, this is one of the most useful books which has appeared for many years.

JOHN A. RYAN.

Science and Society

Scientific Progress, by Sir James Jeans, F.R.S., Sir William Bragg, O.M., F.R.S., Professor E. V. Appleton, F.R.S., Professor Edward Mellanby M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S., Professor J. B. S. Haldane, F.R.S., and Professor Julian Huxley. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

THIS volume records the Sir Halley Stewart lecture for 1935, by six British scientists of international renown. The famous astrophysicist and popularizer of science, Sir James Jeans, outlines the evolution of man's understanding of the universe in the light of scientific advance. He thinks man is entitled to a more hopeful view of his importance in the universe, now that the deterministic theories of Victorian science, which challenged the belief in the freedom of the will, have given way to the indeterminism of the new physics. Sir James's conclusion that "if we want the truth about the universe or its constituents we must go to the mathematician" is hardly an apposite introduction to "The Progress of Physical Science." But apparently unbothered, Sir William Bragg, Nobel prize winner, draws a highly interesting and illuminating sketch of the remarkable developments in physical science that have been the outgrowth of the corpuscular concept of nature.

The more specific subject seems better suited to the single lecture, however, and Professor Appleton gives a thoroughly satisfying account of "The Electricity in the Atmosphere," discussing such subjects as the earth's electric charge and the reflection of radio waves. Absorbing indeed it is to follow with Professor Mellanby the "Progress in Medical Science" from ancient times up through the modern era. The author's views on the sterility of medicine during the Middle Ages will meet with some disfavor, but quite significant and amazing is the record of medical science since the turn of the century.

Arnold Lunn's controversialist, Professor Haldane, discusses "Human Genetics and Human Ideals," treating in detail the inheritance of hemophilia and idiocy. The probable value of sterilization of the unfit and the theory of racial supremacy fare badly when exposed to Professor Haldane's searching analysis. In the final lecture, "Science and Its Relation to Social Needs," Professor Huxley is much concerned with the profit motive as a determinant of scientific research. He shows that science is not permitted efficiently to realize its potentialities in the service of mankind, particularly in the social sciences.

Needless to say, these lectures deserve to be read, and read thoroughly.

ROBERT B. MORRISSEY.

The Second Empire

The Gaudy Empire, by Alfred Neumann. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.75.

THERE are two ways of writing historical fiction. You "invent"—as we say politely—some characters, and permit them to move through the scenes which history furnishes, or you take the characters from history, and where you must invent you do so only with an awareness of what inferences may reasonably be drawn from the documents before you.

This very praiseworthy method is the one followed by Alfred Neumann. It calls for a comprehensive knowledge of the period, which he has, and for skill, which he has also. The novel, accordingly, is an informed, intelligent, illuminating record of the Second Empire, with Louis Napoleon Bonaparte himself in the foreground, and a vast number of lesser personages, all copiously presented in public and private demeanor.

There is a great deal of attention given to "atmosphere" —to the tone and shape of life as it existed during the Second Empire. There are long and glittering passages, subtly and perhaps too subtly analyzing the impact of affairs upon the general consciousness. Outside of such things, which can be skipped, the novel will be found a fairly compact digest of events as they were influenced by a crafty and unsteady man, gifted with just enough insight into the processes of history and of justice to doubt, sometimes, the wisdom of the course upon which his ambition impelled him.

VINCENT ENGELS.

Genius

Edgar Allan Poe, by Edward Shanks. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

THE author of this brief critical biography complains that American scholars and publishers have devoted too much labor to the events of the poet's life while neglecting the work of the man who made possible America's first great contribution to world literature, a complaint both reasonable and just. In spite of which the writer gives considerable space to a reexamination of those events of Poe's life, leaving all too few pages for his excellent treatment of Poe as poet, teller of tales, and critic.

Although decidedly an admirer of Poe's genius, Mr. Shanks is, in no sense, a worshiper at the shrine of the poet. He examines the works, both poetry and prose, and attempts to evaluate these with critical thoroughness.

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Had the chapters devoted to criticism been longer, giving the author space for a more extended treatment of the individual pieces, the value of the study would have been greater. The final chapter, dealing with Poe as the first of the decadents and with his influence upon subsequent writers, is confined entirely to a survey of that influence upon European writers and makes no mention of Hawthorne and other Americans who wrote under the same influence. On the whole, the book is a scholarly contribution to the study of America's outstanding man of letters.

WILLIAM MCKEE.

CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN A. LOFTUS is a Baltimore lawyer and magazine writer.

EDWARD A. BRANIFF is a special agent for the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States.

JOHN ROBERT QUINN is a poet and essayist.

REV. BONAVENTURE SCHWINN, O.S.B., is Subprior of St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kans.

MARION GRUBB is a contributor to current periodicals.

RT. REV. MSGR. JOHN A. RYAN is professor of moral theology and industrial ethics in the Catholic University of America, and director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. He is the author of "A Living Wage," "Social Reconstruction" and "A Better Economic Order."

ROBERT B. MORRISSEY is an experimental physicist and professor of chemistry at the College of the Sacred Heart, New York City.

VINCENT ENGELS writes for periodicals.

WILLIAM MCKEE is professor of literature at St. John's University, Brooklyn, N. Y.

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